

Amendments to the Specification

Please replace the third full paragraph on page 4 with the following amended paragraph:

FIGS. 1 and 2 show side elevation and perspective views of a feeding implement respectively in accordance with an exemplary embodiment of the present invention. Feeding implement 110 includes handle portion 112 attached to transport portion 114, with an optional mouth guard 115 removably connected in between the handle portion 112 and the transport portion 114. The entire handle portion 112, e.g., is sized and shaped in dimensions suitable for holding by an infant or small child, for example from about 0.9 to 1.2 inches at its widest point. Moreover, the handle portion 112 can be tapered at either end for improved comfort. The handle portion can include a rigid core 116 ~~The handle 116 can consist of a rigid core (not shown)~~ to provide structural rigidity to the feeding implement 110, and a handle cover 118. The rigid core can be made of a material that has sufficient rigidity for handling by a small child, for example polypropylene. The rigid core can be covered, for example over-molded, by a soft polymer, e.g., polyvinyl chloride or an elastomeric polymer, such as SANTOPRENE, available from Advanced Elastomer Systems (Akron, Ohio) or KRATON, a styrene-butadiene elastomer from Shell Oil Company (Houston, Texas). Optionally, molded on or onto the handle portion 112 is plurality of protuberances 120 which are present to aid grasping by the small child. The protuberances 120 can be a series of concentric ridges, as shown in FIGS. 1 and 2, or a spiral ridge. The protuberances 120 can also consist of discrete bumps or any other suitable shapes.